

# **ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION No.**

## **68**

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## **STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

### **211th LEGISLATURE**

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PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2004 SESSION

**Sponsored by:**

**Assemblyman CRAIG A. STANLEY**

**District 28 (Essex)**

**Assemblyman DAVID R. MAYER**

**District 4 (Camden and Gloucester)**

**Assemblyman JOSEPH VAS**

**District 19 (Middlesex)**

**Co-Sponsored by:**

**Assemblymen Hackett, Green, Assemblywoman Stender, Assemblymen Caraballo, Cryan, Assemblywomen Previte, Cruz-Perez, Assemblymen Payne, Conners, Assemblywoman Greenstein and Senator Turner**

**SYNOPSIS**

Establishes the "Task Force to Study Attendance at Public Schools."

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As reported by the Assembly Education Committee with technical review.

**(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 3/30/2004)**

1   **A JOINT RESOLUTION** establishing the "Task Force to Study  
2   Attendance in Public Schools."

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4   **WHEREAS**, Attendance is shown to be positively associated with  
5   student performance; and

6   **WHEREAS**, Under the federal "No Child Left Behind Act of 2001,"  
7   student performance on reading, math and science are to be used as  
8   indicators of the performance of schools with certain consequences  
9   for schools whose students do not perform at certain levels; and

10   **WHEREAS**, Under N.J.S.18A:38-25, parents, guardians or other  
11   persons having custody or control of a child between the ages of 6  
12   and 16, inclusive, are required to cause that child to attend the  
13   public school of the district or a day school in which there is given  
14   instruction equivalent to that provided in the public schools or to  
15   receive equivalent instruction elsewhere than at school; and

16   **WHEREAS**, Patterns of unauthorized absences from school which  
17   begin early in a child's career as a student and which are not  
18   attended to in a careful and decisive manner, often result in more  
19   severe patterns of unauthorized absences as the child grows older;  
20   and

21   **WHEREAS**, Current practices in the State for dealing with a child with  
22   patterns of repeated unauthorized absences are: the treatment of a  
23   parent, guardian or other person having charge and control of the  
24   child as a disorderly person subject to fines and other penalties in  
25   municipal court; or the treatment of the habitual absences as a  
26   family crisis involving a referral of the child and the child's parent,  
27   guardian or person having charge and control of the child to a  
28   Family Crisis Intervention Unit established pursuant to section 1 of  
29   P.L.1982, c.80 (C.2A:4A-76); and

30   **WHEREAS**, In response to a requirement under the federal "No Child  
31   Left Behind Act of 2001" that an indicator of school district  
32   performance in addition to the required assessments be selected,  
33   most states are selecting some measure of average daily attendance;  
34   and

35   **WHEREAS**, There is no definition in statute or regulation providing  
36   guidance to school districts regarding what constitutes patterns of  
37   unauthorized absences and as a result there is no uniform policy in  
38   the State on addressing attendance and tardiness; now, therefore,

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40    **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*  
41   *of New Jersey:*

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43    1. There is established the "Task Force to Study Attendance in  
44   Public Schools," which shall be composed of 17 members as follows:  
45   the Commissioner of Education, who shall serve ex officio, or a  
46   designated representative; a representative of the Juvenile Justice

1 Commission, who shall serve ex officio; a representative of the  
 2 Administrative Office of the Courts, who shall serve ex officio; a  
 3 representative of the Division of Youth and Family Services, who shall  
 4 serve ex officio; a representative of the Division of Criminal Justice,  
 5 who shall serve ex officio; eight members of the public appointed by  
 6 the Governor, one of whom shall be a representative of the New Jersey  
 7 School Boards Association, one of whom shall be a representative of  
 8 the New Jersey Association of School Administrators, one of whom  
 9 shall be a representative of New Jersey Principals and Supervisors  
 10 Association, one of whom shall be a representative of the New Jersey  
 11 Education Association, one of whom shall be a representative of the  
 12 New Jersey State Federation of Teachers, one of whom shall be  
 13 representative of the Statewide Parent Advocacy Network, one of  
 14 whom shall be a representative of the New Jersey Fraternal Order of  
 15 Police and one of whom shall be a representative of the New Jersey  
 16 Policeman's Benevolent Association; two members of the Senate, one  
 17 from each party, appointed by the President of the Senate to serve  
 18 during the two-year legislative session in which the appointment is  
 19 made; and two members of the General Assembly, one member from  
 20 each party, appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly to serve  
 21 during the two-year legislative session in which the appointment is  
 22 made. Vacancies in the membership of the task force shall be filled in  
 23 the same manner as the original appointments were made.

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25 2. a. The Commissioner of Education, or the commissioner's  
 26 designee, shall serve as chairperson of the task force and shall call a  
 27 meeting of the task force as soon as is practicable after the  
 28 appointment of its members. The task force shall select a vice-  
 29 chairperson from among its members and may select a secretary who  
 30 need not be a member of the task force. The members of the task  
 31 force shall be nonsalaried, but may be reimbursed for necessary and  
 32 reasonable expenses actually incurred in the performance of their  
 33 duties, within the limit of funds appropriated or otherwise made  
 34 available to the task force for this purpose.

35 b. The task force shall be entitled to call to its assistance and avail  
 36 itself of the services of the employees of any State, county, or  
 37 municipal department, board, bureau, commission or agency as it may  
 38 require and as may be made available for its purposes.

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40 3. It shall be the duty of the task force to study current practices  
 41 within school districts in the State regarding student attendance,  
 42 including, but not limited to: absences; tardiness; and procedures for  
 43 addressing students with patterns of unauthorized absences or  
 44 excessive tardiness. In addition, the task force shall investigate what  
 45 other states are doing with respect to student attendance and the  
 46 handling of patterns of unauthorized absences.

**AJR68 STANLEY, MAYER**

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1       4. The task force may meet and hold hearings at the place or places  
2 it designates during the sessions or recesses of the Legislature and  
3 shall issue a report of its findings and recommendations, including any  
4 recommended legislation, to the Governor and the Legislature no later  
5 than one year after its first meeting.

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7       5. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately and shall  
8 expire 30 days after the submission of the task force's report.